

Executive Committee Meeting – Friday, 7 January 2005 at 10:00 a.m.
Dane County Highway Garage, 2302 Fish Hatchery Road, Madison, WI

1) Chairman Shroble call the meeting to order at 10:02 am

2) Executive Committee Member Roll Call:

William	Agnew	Rock	Present
Steve	Foye	Iowa	Present
Gene	Gray	Dane	Present
Marion	Martin	Grant	
Karl	Nilson	Waukesha	Present
Ted	Sheckler	Crawford	Present
Gerald	Shroble	Walworth	Present
Ed	Stoltz	Waukesha	Present
Larry	Volz	Sauk	Present

Other Commissioners Present: Phil Blazkowski (Rock); Forrest Van Schwartz (Dane); Robert Sinklair (Sauk). **Others Present:** Joni Graves (SWWRPC/ WRTC staff); Ron Adams (WisDOT); Roger Larson (WisDOT District 1); Ken Lucht and Jim Kalrath (WSOR); Larry Nelson (City of Madison).

3) Motion to Accept Proof of Public Notice / Stoltz / Agnew / Motion passed unanimously.

4) Motion to approve the Agenda, with some items forwarded to the February meeting since Jim Matzinger and Frank Huntington were not present / Stoltz / Gray / Motion passed unanimously.

5) Motion approving 10 Dec '04 Full Commission Minutes / Gray / Stoltz / Motion passed unanimously.

6) WSOR Monthly Operator's Report – Ken Lucht

a) Crawford Junction Interchange

- **Introduction of Jim Kalrath, WSOR**
- **WSOR's 2004 Maintenance Summary / 2004 Production Totals** (handout was provided).

Commissioner Foye arrived at 10:16 am.

- **WSOR's 2005 Proposed Capital Upgrades** include a tie-replacement project from Slinger Milwaukee and bridge work in Fox Lake, IL.
- **Other issues and topics included:** 1) appreciation for the sympathy expressed upon the death of Lucy Stone Gardner; 2) WSOR 2005 calendar; 3) WSOR's upcoming newsletter; 4) FRA whistle-blowing update (compliance date has been extended); 5) planned high-rail in Rock County; and 6) WSOR may acquire a customer that ICE had retained to-date but may now release, which lead to discussion about potential to serve the Beloit market.

FOLLOW-UP: Request that WSOR provide a map showing system segments that can handle 286 lb rail; Lucht said he would follow up.

- Steve Foye again requested that WSOR do preventative maintenance on the **Mazomanie Line**; Lucht expressed concern that personnel is not available; Foye asked that WSOR get a cost estimate and suggested that WRTC may even pay to have the work done to prevent tie deterioration and protect the

Commission's investment; he noted that if maintained, stored cars could be kept further up the line and he referenced articles in the paper and letters to the editor that have complained about stored cars. The item was not on the Agenda and the WRRTC took no action.

FOLLOW-UP: Gene Gray pointed out that WRRTC's volunteer historian needs to receive articles and letters-to-the-editor about rail-related topics.

FOLLOW-UP: Lucht said he would follow-up on Foye's request.

7) **WisDOT Update** – Frank Huntington was on vacation.

8) **WRRTC Financials & Contracts**

a), b), and c) Jim Matzinger was out with health issues.

FOLLOW-UP: Treasurer's Report, consideration of action on invoices received, and the project funding update were forwarded the February 2005 meeting.

d) **Operator's Agreement**

After the meeting, **Attachment 6 to Agreement No. 0490-40-48(d)** was signed. Its terms, which were approved at the December 2004 meeting, grant WSOR a three-year amended lease to the Operator's Agreement with an annual rent obligation for the years 2005-2007 in the amount of \$25,000/year (though December 31, 2007).

e) **Ad-hoc Staffing Sub-Committee Update** (forwarded from the December 2004 meeting)

Steve Foye, Ad-hoc Staffing Sub-Committee Chair, reported that one option would be to use a secretarial/management business, but that the person that had been contacted would not be able to take this project on at this time.

Motion to continue with the current staffing arrangement on a month-to-month basis / Foye /

Without a second, some discussion followed. Graves indicated that she would have to take this request back to SWWRPC for consideration and asked about the underlying reason for such an action. Foye explained that he wanted an hourly contract, which Graves indicated is what the Commission has had to-date and that it is under these same terms that SWWRPC and Dane County had made their 2005 proposal. Foye said that in his opinion, counties may drop out of the WRRTC because of management costs and he recommended that the Commission take a more active role. Several Commissioners disagreed with various points and Nilson concluded: "We're getting a lot of bang for the buck for \$17K." Gray noted that the Commission needs to decide how much support it can afford.

Gray seconded the Motion to continue the current staffing arrangement on a month-to-month basis / Agnew, Martin, Nilson, Sheckler, Shroble, Stoltz, and Volz voted No / Foye and Gray voted Yes / Motion failed.

f) **Dane County and SWWRPC proposals for continuing staff services** (provided in the Dec mailing)

Motion to accept the staff services proposal submitted by SWWRPC for 2005 / Nilson / Volz / Motion passed with Foye voting No.

Motion to accept the staff services proposal submitted by Dane County Highway & Transportation Department for 2005 / Nilson / Gray / Motion passed unanimously.

Some discussion followed about the possible future role of the Committee. Commissioners thanked Foye, Gray, and Sheckler for their work. Ron Adams, WisDOT, noted that the \$25,000 that WRRTC receives from WSOR cover much of the Commission's expenses, adding: "The biggest impediment to county participation is the success of the railroad – there's not the same drive to 'Save the railroads!' anymore."

- **County Funds:** After other discussion, Foye indicated interest on the part of Iowa County to use the money that it has on reserve with WRRTC to upgrade ties in the villages of Arena and Avoca, expressing concern about the shipping of hazardous materials. Van Schwartz said, "I want to correct one myth – ethanol is not anywhere near the danger level of gasoline and it's less dangerous than diesel." Foye continued: "We've got the money and we'd like to see our money used for this." Lucht was asked what WSOR is currently shipping on the line and he explained that ethanol is shipped to Prairie du Chien and fertilizer is shipped to Hartung Brothers, near Arena.

FOLLOW-UP: Foye requested that this be placed on the Agenda for the February 2005 meeting and that he would get a quote from WSOR.

FOLLOW-UP: Van Schwartz volunteered to provide more information about these substances.

9) Updates/Old Business

- a) **WRRTC Appointments to the Joint Project Committee with EWCRC** – At the November 2004 meeting, the Commission passed a Motion seeking three volunteers to serve; it was reported that Gene Gray, Bill Sills, and Forrest Van Schwartz have volunteered in this capacity. Under the action taken at the November 2004 meeting, Committee members will receive a per diem of \$50.00/meeting and a mileage reimbursement of .36 cents/mile (or the current IRS-established rate), paid by the WRRTC.
- b) **Sauk Bridge Study Update** – because Jim Matzinger was not able to attend, no update was available.

FOLLOW-UP: The Sauk Bridge Study Update was forwarded to the February 2005 meeting.

- c) **Advocacy Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee:** At the December meeting, the Executive Committee took action to create a three-person ad-hoc committee to explore the possible value of WRRTC (perhaps with other RTCs) engaging a lobbyist to help advance its interests. Karl Nilson, Phil Blazkowski, and Forrest Van Schwartz have agreed to participate.

Joni Graves provided information from follow-up discussions that she had with Kevin Soucie, Soucie & Associates. Soucie consults for the Canadian National. Rather than seeking a new client in WRRTC, he had expressed interest in meeting informally – and at no charge – with WRRTC's Committee to discuss its desire to: 1) be more visible, 2) formulate its message(s), and 3) to develop a strategy. Graves provided a summary handout that she had prepared about Soucie & Associates.

Ken Lucht noted that in their discussion, the Commissioners seemed to be moving away from hiring a lobbyist. He explained that following the last meeting, he had talked with Sam Gratz, and that Gratz had indicated that he felt it would not be appropriate, given his relationship with the four Class 1 Railroads in the state. Lucht recommended that an alternative would be to join related membership groups including: 1) Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC); 2) Wisconsin Agri-Service Association (WASA); and 3) Wisconsin Fertilizer & Chemical Association (WFCA). He explained that WSOR belongs to all three. Lucht provided a summary handout that he had prepared.

Ron Adams suggested that WRRTC may also be interested in joining the Wisconsin Towns Association and the League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

FOLLOW-UP: Nilson asked staff to: 1) verify what the commissioners' role could be vis-à-vis lobbying per se, and 2) that the role of the Advocacy Sub-Committee be an Agenda item for the February 2005 meeting, including information on WRRTC's Mission Statement.

- d) **WRRTC policy questions re commission terms and elections:** Graves explained that there had been some questions about the terms of membership and how this related to elections. As a part of the discussion, Lucht explained that in the past WRRTC's internal elections had been conducted using a secret ballot at the meeting.
- e) **Request by Lyle Harris, Ironman Wisconsin Triathlon, to use the Park Street Railroad Bridge at Dayton Avenue for their 2005 event (Sept 11, 2005).**

Handouts from Ironman Wisconsin were included in the packets that the Commissioner had received prior to the meeting. Graves distributed a letter from the Madison Parks Department and a letter from WisDOT; Lucht provided a letter from WSOR. The requestor was not present to speak to the request. Larry Nelson, City of Madison, stated that this was the first that he had heard of this request; he confirmed that the projected date for the new bike/ped bridge to open would be October 2006. In their correspondence WisDOT and WSOR requested that, given their safety and liability concerns, the event coordinators make other arrangements in 2005 and try to plan the 2006 event so that they could use the new bike/ped bridge. Lucht indicated that if WSOR is contacted by the event's coordinators, they would be open to delaying their operations to accommodate the event.

Motion to go on record in agreement with WisDOT and WSOR and to support the Railroad's efforts to otherwise accommodate the 2005 Ironman event in Madison / Foye / Sheckler / Motion passed unanimously.

10) The meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

Recorded By:

Approved:

Joni Graves, SWWRPC Transportation Planner

Date | William Agnew, WRRTC Secretary